

spree. "I don't like the company. They don't treat their employees right. They don't even treat the customer right."

"But," she added, "the price is reasonable."

Holly Hamilton pushed her shopping cart through the parking lot looking not unlike an ad for Wal-Mart. In her cart was almost everything the 27-year-old nurse would need for an upcoming camping trip: a fishing pole, beach towels, food and bottled water, all gathered at a single store for hard-to-beat prices.

Like many customers outside the Pittsburgh store Wednesday, Hamilton did not know about Tuesday's ruling, but when told, she expressed some concern and said she might consider shopping elsewhere if a court determined the company discriminated against women.

During an afternoon break, Dukes, dressed in a black and tan outfit with a billowing red scarf, turned an upside down shopping cart into an impromptu chair.

"Wish you the best of luck, sweetie," a male customer called to Dukes in the store parking lot.

Dukes was hired at Wal-Mart a decade ago, with grand plans for a quick move up the ladder into management. Instead, she says, she was passed over for promotions repeatedly, as men with less experience landed the job.

But she makes \$12.53 an hour—an increase of more than 25% in the three years since the lawsuit was filed, thanks to generous raises. A volunteer minister, Dukes likes most of her co-workers and bosses, who "respect my right to pursue this matter." She likes most of the customers, most parts of the job. She works at Wal-Mart and shops at Wal-Mart, and loves the prices.

"All we're asking for is our day in court, and to let the evidence speak for itself."

The ruling, in which Jenkins said the "evidence raises an inference that Wal-Mart engages in discriminatory practices in compensation and promotion that affect all plaintiffs in a common manner," however, is by no means the company's first considerable trial. And even as the number of Wal-Mart critics appears to be growing, so does the number of its defenders—and so does the company's reach.

One of the company's previous blows came in April, when Inglewood voters soundly defeated a sweeping initiative that would have allowed the company to build a Supercenter the size of 17 football fields without going through the traditional layers of city bureaucracy.

The company spent more than \$1 million in its failed effort to pass the initiative, buying television commercials and handing out doughnuts, all for an election that drew just 12,000 voters. Opponents spent a fraction of that amount and won the contest, about 7,000 casting ballots against the proposal and 4,500 in favor.

The contest's David vs. Goliath overtones rippled across the country. On paper, however, the defeat cost the company but a single Supercenter.

And the company, which opened its first Supercenter in the state this spring in La Quinta, southeast of Palm Springs, has plans for 40 more across California, including stores in Stockton and Hemet expected to open this year.

The Supercenters are the company's most controversial because of their size, averaging 200,000 square feet, and the fact that they stock groceries.

Wal-Mart pays its employees, male and female, less than many other similar retail outlets as well as grocery stores. The so-called Wal-Mart effect—the company's ability to undercut competitors with its lower

wages and prices—helped trigger the longest grocery store strike in Southern California last year as some grocers sought wage and benefit concessions they said were needed to compete with the Supercenters.

Although the company lost its Inglewood battle, and as many California cities, including Los Angeles, have passed ordinances that effectively ban such massive "box stores," the company has found open arms in many other parts of the state. Some describe the Inglewood opposition, the lawsuit and other attacks on the company as knee-jerk bashing of a successful corporation.

In Gilroy, where the City Council voted 5 to 2 in March to approve a Supercenter, Wal-Mart proponents wrote off the news of the lawsuit ruling as legal hullabaloo.

"Certification of a class-action suit is easy to do," said Bill Lindsteadt, executive director of the Gilroy Economic Development Corp., which embraces the new center. "It's frivolous. It's another ploy by the unions to force Wal-Mart to become union."

While heated fights over proposed Supercenters are playing out across the state, some observers say the company is facing increasing difficulties as it moves from rural and suburban markets into urban areas—and that Tuesday's ruling may increase opposition.

As Wal-Mart moves "from the suburban fringe and really starts to look more in urban areas . . . they're encountering a different level of concern and opposition than they were when they were building out amid the strip malls," said Amaha Kassa, co-director of the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy. "These kinds of issues of pay equity and disparate treatment are very much going to be issues of concern for urban voters."

#### RECOGNIZING SANDCASTLE DAYS IN IMPERIAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA

**HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 25, 2004*

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a country of patriots. A nation entering a hot summer, full of turmoil and uncertainty.

The coming three months will be marked by many significant world events; the transfer of sovereignty in Iraq, the Olympic games in Greece, an escalating November election at home.

The world will spin a little faster this summer and to compensate we must all pull together as a nation.

It is time for us to reconnect, to remind ourselves what it is that makes us uniquely American.

We are all neighbors, and that which divides us will never outshine that which unites us.

We are all neighbors, and for that reason I share with the community what is happening in my yard this summer.

In one month time the 28,000 residents of Imperial Beach, California will be holding their city's 48th birthday commemoration.

Proudly anchored as the country's most southwesterly city, this diverse seaside town is preparing to celebrate the same way it has for the past quarter-century. Come early July, the city of Imperial Beach will be holding its 24th annual U.S. Open Sandcastle Competition.

For three days, creativity and civic pride will be honored. In addition to the sand-sculpting

contest, festivities will include a community ball, street parade, and nighttime fireworks display over the Pacific.

The weekend long celebration will draw over 250,000 spectators. People will swarm the sand to see creations that will not last the next tide. In the spirit of ingenuity, modern marvels of dirt will be erected and destroyed in an afternoon's time.

For three days the sun will shine and the children will smile. The world will slow in this corner of the country and we will celebrate the anniversary of a city, the essence of a nation.

We are a "can do" people, but that does not mean we should have to do it alone.

My district is only 1 of 435, and so I ask my fellow Representatives in the House, what is your District doing this summer? Let us share in this most public of forums, that which unites us as a country.

We are each other's neighbors and we should not let an opportunity to come together pass us by. The world will seem a smaller and safer place if we know what is happening in our own backyards.

So as summer quickly comes to our countryside, let us give voice to our originality, and champion all that makes our society truly extraordinary.

#### 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF THE TARAS SHEVCHENKO MONUMENT

**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 25, 2004*

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on June 26, 2004, the Ukrainian American community will be celebrating the 40th jubilee commemoration of the unveiling of the monument to Taras Shevchenko, known as the bard of Ukraine for his exquisite lyric poetry and numerous novels, as well as his many works of art.

Taras Shevchenko was born in the Kyiv region in 1814 to a childhood of servitude and a life of hardship. He first worked as a houseboy until his owner realized his artistic talent, after which he was apprenticed to a painter. His freedom was purchased in 1838 by another painter who appreciated Mr. Shevchenko's work.

An ardent champion of freedom and Ukrainian independence, Taras Shevchenko saw George Washington as a symbol and liberator of the American people from the colonial rule of a foreign power. Mr. Shevchenko's works played a key role in the awakening and drive for national liberation of the Ukrainian people. In his poems, he attacked tyrants, oppressors and all enemies of human freedom and decency.

Mr. Shevchenko's love of freedom and criticism of the czars resulted in his arrest in 1847. He was first sentenced to forced military duty, and later imprisonment, where he remained in Russian custody until his release in 1857, two years after the death of Czar Nicholas. He was arrested again in 1859 and remained under police surveillance until his death in 1861.

Years of harsh punishment did nothing to curtail his fight against the imperialist and colonial occupation of his native land. Mr. Shevchenko secretly produced numerous